

# Quotes, Notes & Anecdotes

A Monthly Employee Newsletter Published by the Department of Administration

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## Employee of the Month

### FARS' Shan Ferrell Dedicated to Producing Quality Work

**Shan Ferrell**, a financial reporting specialist II for the Financial Accounting and Reporting Section of the Finance Division, has been selected as the department's *Employee of the Month* for June.

A four-year employee of state government, Shan is responsible for preparing workpapers, footnotes and other schedules for the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR).

He also conducts meetings, trains agency person-

nel on GAAP and WVFIMS policies and procedures, and prepares internal audits and official bond statements.

According to one of his co-workers, "Shan is extremely dedicated to producing quality and accurate work, regardless of the time constraints placed upon him." Another co-worker adds, "He is very dedicated to customer service. He has traveled to many agencies to help in preparing financial information and has received written and verbal praise for his efforts."

In his spare time, Shan enjoys golfing, bowling and fishing, but especially spending time with his wife and daughter.

Please join Shan at his *Employee of the Month* presentation at 11:30 a.m. on Monday, June 3, at FARS' South Charleston office.



**SHAN FERRELL**  
June Employee  
of the Month

## Administration ...in FOCUS

Beginning with this issue of **Quotes, Notes & Anecdotes**, we'll take a closer look at the divisions and agencies within the Department of Administration.

This month, agencies that administer benefits will be highlighted: Board of Risk and Insurance Management, Children's Health Insurance Agency, Consolidated Public Retirement Board and the Public Employees Insurance Agency.

### Family Vacation Triggers a New Meaning to IS&C's Chris Leslie

Family vacations are most often filled with fun, relaxation and an opportunity to rekindle *quality time* with your family. Rarely, can one say that they had as much excitement as IS&C's Chris Leslie, his wife Bobbi, and children Drew and Abby, during a recent trip to Columbus, Ohio.

After visiting the Columbus Zoo, the Leslie family decided to go to COSI, a nationally-recognized science center known for its hands-on programs and experiments.



**The quick action of IS&C's Chris Leslie resulted in a lifesaving feat.**

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## Sneak Peek INSIDE...

- ◆ PEIA's Wellness Program Gets State Workers on the Road to Better Health
- ◆ Agency Payroll Coordinator Workshop Set by CPRB
- ◆ Learn More About Our Agencies that Offer Insurance Benefits
- ◆ People Talk

# PEIA's Wellness Program Drives State Workers on the Road to Better Health



**Priscilla Bickley, PEIA's worksite wellness coordinator (seated), said self-satisfaction is the driving force for her efforts. She is pleased to hear success stories from her co-workers regarding the program. Some PEIA employees who were positively affected by the program are (standing, l-r) Diane Tittle, Ernie Terry and Marie Terry.**

Since October of 2001, the Public Employees Insurance Agency (PEIA) has taken a new direction to its wellness program by expanding health screening, piloting bone density screens, establishing more comprehensive follow-up care and providing preventive care information.

This innovative program is called *Pathways to Wellness*, sponsored by PEIA and administered by Partners in Corporate Health.

State employees are encouraged to begin the *road to better health* by becoming an "active worksite," according to Nidia Henderson, PEIA's wellness manager. "This program is available to all public employee worksites. Currently, we have 150 designated sites, but we have the capacity to grow," she said.

**What's the process and benefits of becoming an "active worksite" for this**

**program?** The process is simple. Sandy Eskew, vice president of Operations/Health Services for Partners In Corporate Health explains that the first step is to complete an application. An individual needs to volunteer to serve as the worksite's wellness coordinator. A team of employees to assist the coordinator also is helpful. Senior management support is vital to the program's success.

Once the worksite is approved, the benefits quickly begin. Onsite health screenings for employees are offered, which include educational materials, a questionnaire to create a personal wellness profile, blood pressure, height and weight, BMI (body mass index) and blood work for cholesterol, HDL, LDL, triglycerides and glucose. Optional tests, such as PSA, thyroid panel, complete metabolic panel and CBC tests, also are offered for a nominal fee.

Henderson explains that five major areas are addressed, heart disease, hypertension, osteoporosis, obesity and diabetes. "We try to focus on the chronic health problems that can be avoided," she said. "Nearly 60 percent of all health care claims are related to the individual's lifestyle. Such factors affecting one's life include nutrition, physical activity, stress and tobacco use."

A detailed report is sent to the individual as well as his or her designated physician, assessing areas of potential

high risk. Follow-up screenings are offered after the report is released.

This aspect of the program is called *NextSteps*. "The Pathways staff looks at the individual's risks, according to his or her screening and personal wellness profile results," Henderson said. "We discuss the individual's objectives and determine attainable goals they can work toward. We reinforce those goals with educational materials and a telephone number they can call for help."

The *West Virginia Tobacco Quitline (1-877-966-8784)* for those individuals who want to stop smoking is still in full swing and, for a limited time, can obtain a six-week supply of nicotine patches at no cost. "This is a wonderful benefit," Henderson said. "This is a nice alternative for those who want to quit." There is a two-time usage per lifetime for those covered under PEIA.

**What is YOUR agency waiting for?** Priscilla Bickley, secretary to the agency's general counsel, serves as PEIA's worksite wellness coordinator. She is pleased with the positive response from her co-workers to various activities planned to improve their health.

"I was trying to think of a good way to get the employees excited, so I designed a survey to find out what they wanted," she said. "I expected a few people to return the survey, but I received an overwhelming



**Tom Susman, PEIA Director (far right), is pictured with his agency's Wellness Team: (seated, l-r) Bernadette Curry and Patty Perez; (standing, l-r) Paul Dixon, Priscilla Bickley, Sharon Gill, Joanna Smith, Kay Tenney, Ellen Akers, Yolanda Tyler. Absent from the picture are Burley Williams and Frances Buchannon.**

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# ADMINISTRATION...in Focus

## Learning More About the Services We Offer!

*Gretchen Chandler* of the Secretary's Office will highlight the divisions and agencies within the Department of Administration, featuring their programs and outlining their future plans. The first article of this three-part series features the Board of Risk and Insurance Management, the Children's Health Insurance Agency, the Consolidated Public Retirement Board and the Public Employees Insurance Agency.

### Board of Risk and Insurance Management

The West Virginia Board of Risk and Insurance Management (BRIM) provides insurance coverage for all state agencies as well as several non-profit organizations, municipalities, county commissions and volunteer fire departments.

As a result of West Virginia's medical malpractice insurance crisis, the State Legislature passed HB 601 last December, which authorized BRIM to obtain and implement preferred liability and high-risk insurance coverage for private physicians.

BRIM provides liability coverage to three hospitals and nearly 200 physicians. As an alternative to BRIM coverage, a physicians mutual insurance program is now being studied.

With a staff of 18 including Executive Director Chuck Jones, BRIM focuses on loss control, underwriting, processing claims, finance and accounting, information systems and database management. There also is a board of directors consisting of five members and a seven-member special advisory panel that reports to the board on issues relating to medical malpractice coverage.

Jones stressed the importance of continuing education in all facets of loss prevention

and improving communication with all participants.

"West Virginia is a small state with a declining population and an expanding elderly demographic. These factors greatly contribute to the depletion of the state's tax base. We need to do everything in our power to reduce the burden on West Virginia's taxpayers. Minimizing losses will lead to lower premiums and educating participants is definitely a step toward that end," said Jones.

### Children's Health Insurance Agency

Enacted into law in April of 1998, the Children's Health Insurance Agency (CHIP) provides health care coverage to eligible children enabling them to grow into strong, healthy adults.

Nearly 94 percent of West Virginia's children are covered either by CHIP, private insurance or Medicaid. Despite these statistics, Executive Director Sharon Carte says that's not good enough. CHIP will continue to strive to reach every child and develop a health care system in which all West Virginia children have access to insurance coverage.

Last year, Carte estimated the program served 33,000 children. When children enroll in other insurance plans, they are no longer eligible for CHIP. As a result, the actual number

of children at any one point in time is closer to 22,000.

As part of an extensive study conducted by the West Virginia Healthy Kids Coalition, CHIP was able to specify and track geographic areas throughout the state where families were still not reaping the program's benefits. "The CHIP outreach initiative needs to be far more targeted. We went through a period of really aggressive outreach that was very multimedia oriented. I feel we need to concentrate at the school level. By holding school-based clinics, more teachers, parents and children will hear our message," said Carte.

In addition to Carte, CHIP has seven staff members that specialize in specific functions ranging from outreach coordination to finance management. An 11-member board develops plans for health services and develops CHIP's annual financial plan.

### Consolidated Public Retirement Board

Interim Co-Executive Directors J. Michael Adkins and Terasa L. Robertson oversee and manage the Consolidated Public Retirement Board (CPRB). The CPRB administers eight retirement systems, six of which are defined benefit plans, another a defined contribution plan and, lastly, an optional 457 deferred compensation plan.

The defined plan has a guaranteed benefit upon retire-



**Mike Adkins and Terasa Robertson, Interim Co-Executive Directors of CPRB.**



**Sharon Carte, Executive Director of the Children's Health Insurance Agency (CHIP)**



**Chuck Jones, BRIM's Executive Director.**



**Tom Susman, PEIA's Executive Director.**

**Continued on Page 4**



## Unusual Facts About our State



(Note: State offices are closed on June 20 in observance of West Virginia Day)

### Did you know that...

- ◆ The variety of yellow apple, the Golden Delicious, originated in Clay County in 1775.
- ◆ West Virginia has a mean altitude of 1,500 feet, giving it the highest average altitude east of the Mississippi.
- ◆ One of the first suspension bridges in the world was completed in Wheeling in 1849.
- ◆ Outdoor advertising had its origin in Wheeling in 1908 with Mail Pouch Chewing Tobacco.
- ◆ The first post office in West Virginia was in Martinsburg.
- ◆ The first brick street in the world was laid in Charleston in 1870.
- ◆ The 1500 block of Virginia Street in Charleston is considered the longest city block in the world.

### PEIA Wellness Program Continued from Page 2

response. The survey turned out to be a jewel." Eskew adds that the worksite program needs to be an employee-driven program to be successful.

In response to employee suggestions, Bickley coordinated a walking program called *Let's Get Physical*, which is offered every day during lunch. An incentive to the program was that those who participate receive a pedometer, a device used to measure walking distance. Of the 54 employees at PEIA, 39 signed up for the program.

A weight loss program also is being developed, with *Lunch and Learn* workshops to be conducted to offer information on health-related issues. Minigrants also are available to fund certain programs.

The enthusiasm has become contagious with 10 employees volunteering to work on an organizational team with Bickley (see picture on page 2). Volunteering as a worksite wellness coordinator takes time and energy. "I find self-

satisfaction in doing this job," Bickley said. "I like to help others with their health problems."

Many testimonials can be easily found at PEIA. Twila Ruggieri, secretary to PEIA Director Tom Susman, has lost 33 pounds in about two months. "I found the program to be an incentive. I feel better and have more energy." Diane Tittle agrees. "I now walk three to four times a week. It's a stress reliever."

Marie Terry and her husband Ernie are proud of their accomplishments. Ernie has lost 91 pounds and Marie has lost 75 pounds, both attributing this program to their success. "Our 17-year-old son now says that it is hard for him to keep up with us," Marie laughs.

Worksite wellness coordinators meet twice a year to share ideas and learn new information to share with their employees, Eskew said. "Creativity is encouraged," she adds. For details on how your agency can participate in this program, visit the [peiapathways.com](http://peiapathways.com) website or call toll-free at 1-866-YOURGUIDE.

### Administration...in Focus Continued from Page 3

ment and is based upon a member's years of service and final average salary. The six defined plans are the Public Employees Retirement System (PERS), Teachers Retirement System, Judges Retirement System, Public Safety Plan A and B, and the Deputy Sheriffs Retirement System.

Established in 1961, PERS has approximately 34,000 active members and 17,500 receiving annuity benefits. The 457 deferred compensation plan is supplemental to the PERS retirement plans. All contributions made to this plan are tax-deferred.

The board of directors consists of a representative of Governor Bob Wise, Cabinet Secretary Greg Burton, State Auditor Glen Gainer, State Treasurer John Perdue, and a member of each retirement system. The board is conducting a national search for an executive director.

CPRB is primarily structured into two functional areas: membership services and benefits coordination. Adkins and Robertson hope to increase awareness of the 457 plan, encourage website access, plan one-day seminars for payroll clerks, establish a new and consistent database, and enable a secure internet website for accessing financial information.

### Public Employees Insurance Agency

Executive Director Tom Susman of the Public Employees Insurance Agency (PEIA) is focusing on several upcoming campaigns, one on the promotion of generic drugs.

### Chill Out in the Office

If you are stuck in the office and cannot get outside, try these three stress-busting exercises before walking to your meeting:

- ◆ Close your hands in a tight fist for 10 seconds and slowly open them. Repeat five times.
- ◆ Roll your head from side to side. Repeat five times.
- ◆ Tighten your toes, hold them for 10 seconds, and release. Repeat five times.

- Adapted from  
*Fast Company*

## CPRB Schedules Agency Payroll Coordinator Workshop for July 1

The Consolidated Public Retirement Board (CPRB) is scheduling an educational workshop for state agency payroll coordinators on July 1 in Building 7, Conference Room C at the State Capitol Complex.

This workshop will focus on information relative to active and retired memberships of the Public Employees Retirement System (PERS).

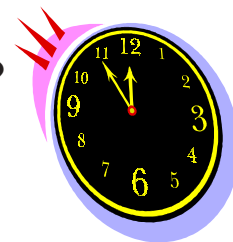
Registration begins at 8:30 a.m. A continental breakfast will be served. The workshop will be held from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The topics scheduled for discussion include:

- New legislation
  - Retirement, membership and benefit issues
  - CPRB's website
  - 457 Deferred Compensation Plan
  - PEIA issues
- Registration is required.

For additional information or to offer suggestions or comments on the Agency Payroll Coordinator Workshop, please contact Tina Holmes at 558-3570 or via electronic mail at [tholmes@wvretirement.com](mailto:tholmes@wvretirement.com).

## What's Your Time Management Snag?



Does it seem like **everyone** is disorganized these days? If workers planned better, they would not feel guilty about taking time off work or even going out for lunch. According to a recent survey:

- ⊕ 83 percent of us would like to be more organized;
- ⊕ 50 percent say they feel guilty taking time off;
- ⊕ 62 percent eat at their desks while doing work.
- ⊕ While Tuesday is the most productive day in a week, 11 percent did not even know on which day they were more efficient.

### Happy Father's Day to YOU

June 16, 2002

When I was 14-years-old, I was amazed at how unintelligent my father was. By the time I turned 21, I was astounded how much he had learned in the last seven years.

Mark Twain

### IS&C's CHRIS LESLIE Continued from Page 1

It was during a demonstration of electric circuits that COSI employee Joe Blankenship received a shock of his life...up to 15,000 volts of electricity. He was explaining the workings of a combustion engine and the role of spark plugs to Leslie, Drew and four other interested visitors, when his left elbow accidentally touched a live wire that was intended to release electricity into part of the equipment and produce a flash. Instead, the electric current went through Blankenship's body.

"I thought to myself that this is *real* and that I was going to have to break the connection," Leslie said. Knowing enough about electricity to avoid endangering himself, he jumped into the air and knocked Blankenship off the wire to break the connection. "After we fell to the floor, I ran



**COSI CEO/President Kathryn Sullivan met with Leslie and his family during their visit at the science center.**

straight out the door. I grabbed another employee, explained what happened and told him to call 911," he adds.

As he turned to assist the injured employee, the children who had witnessed this terrifying event were close by. Leslie recalls his eight-year-old son Drew looking at him, saying, "I want to go home." Leslie couldn't agree more. Blankenship was treated and released the following day at Grant Medical Center.

COSI officials expressed their gratitude by treating Leslie and his family as "VIPs" for the day, offering special gifts and lunch. Leslie said that former NASA astronaut and COSI President/CEO Dr. Kathryn D. Sullivan shared a story of how her father saved her life when she received an electrical shock when she was young; a scar on her hand serves as a reminder. "She looked at my son and asked, 'Do you know that your dad is a hero?'" Leslie recalls. Drew's reply was somewhat nonchalant, saying, 'Yeah, I already knew that.'"

Quotes, Notes & Anecdotes is published by the Department of Administration

**Bob Wise**  
Governor

**Gregory A. Burton**  
Cabinet Secretary

**Diane Holley**  
Public Information Officer/Editor

**Special Thanks**  
Priscilla Bickley  
Gretchen Chandler  
Tina Holmes  
Kaye Parks  
Sandy Singleton

Generic drugs are FDA-approved and, in most cases, treat the illness in the same manner as its brand name counterpart. On an average, a brand name prescription costs approximately \$75 in comparison to the equivalent generic drug at \$15.

Another issue is the use of emergency rooms in the event of non-emergencies. The cost of an emergency room visit can reach nearly \$300, compared to a \$15 charge at HealthPlus.

The Wellness Program is another area of special interest for PEIA. Health screenings, exercise and nutrition are all fundamental elements of staying healthy. He plans to take these themes to PEIA participants via the internet, newsletters, specialized mailings, and educational inserts in their monthly explanation of benefits.

PEIA takes a team approach to its staff organization. This "bottom-up" management style consists of a management team of 30 people and nearly 50 staff members. Susman expressed that his staff is skilled and that their experience and insight ensures that the agency operates smoothly with increased levels of customer satisfaction.

Governor Bob Wise insisted that all state health agencies work together to form the Health Umbrella Group, which organizes Workers' Compensation, Medicaid, PEIA and CHIP to reduce agency costs, leverage stronger state purchasing power and better service not only PEIA members but also the public.

"PEIA insures approximately one out of every eight West Virginians. As a result, we have a vested interest in the health status of all West Virginians," said Susman. "The vision the Governor has put forth is paramount to our success."

For more details on these agencies, visit the Department's website at [www.state.wv.us/admin](http://www.state.wv.us/admin).

**Welcome to the Department!...Pam Griffith and Ron Null** (IS&C); **John Doub** (CPRB); **Chuck Bowman** (Purchasing); and **Debbie Tincher** (Finance).

**Congratulations!...to Joanna Smith** (PEIA) who was recently promoted from an accounting technician III to an accounting technician IV.

**Best Wishes...to Ron Dukate** of the Purchasing Division who recently retired. *Enjoy!*

**Good Luck!...to Jim Bone** of IS&C who resigned from the department.

**PEOPLE TALK**

**Got News?...**Let us know what's going on with you and your family. Contact Diane Holley, editor, at (304) 558-0661 with information to share with the department's employees.

**Let's Talk Basketball...**Purchasing's Dan Miller and Donna Prunty with the Secretary's Office are more than happy to talk about basketball considering that their daughters and a few other 14-year-old girls won first place in a state 15-under basketball tournament in Beckley, sponsored by the Youth Basketball of America (YBOA). Laura Miller and Meredith Prunty are on the West Virginia Tornadoes team. *Congratulations!*

*Every time you are tempted to react in the same old way, ask if you want to be a prisoner of the past or a pioneer of the future...*

Deepak Chopra

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY ... in June**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 Anthony Thaxton . Gen. Services       | 14 Steve Compton.Pros. Atty. Institute |
| 2 Violet Burns ..... Gen. Services      | Camma Pennington ..... BRIM            |
| Robert Miller ..... BRIM                | 16 Michael Gray ..... Personnel        |
| 3 Joe Hermsdorfer ..... IS&C            | Ken Huffman .... Gen. Services         |
| Gerald Roueche ..... PEIA               | 17 Judith Kessler ..... Personnel      |
| 4 Amy Leslie ..... Pros. Atty. Institue | Joan Mullins ..... Finance             |
| Chris Leslie ..... IS&C                 | Dan Shriver ..... IS&C                 |
| Leann Neccuzi ..... IS&C                | 18 Susan Estep ..... CPRB              |
| Amy Newman ..... IS&C                   | 19 Louis Pishner ... Gen. Services     |
| Pat Quinlan ..... Personnel             | 20 Joann Edwards ..... CPRB            |
| 7 Ellen Akers ..... PEIA                | 21 Justin McCoy ..... CPRB             |
| John Carter ..... Gen. Services         | 22 Deanna Karlen ..... IS&C            |
| Kitty Wilson .... Public Defenders      | Alice Thibodeaux ... Purchasing        |
| 8 Jennings Ashby ... Gen. Services      | 24 Ken Morris ..... Gen. Services      |
| Yolonda Tyler ..... PEIA                | 25 Mart Denison ..... IS&C             |
| 9 Gary Buzzard ..... IS&C               | 26 Angela Long ..... Finance           |
| Diana Schwab ..... Finance              | Dennis Stewart .. Gen. Services        |
| 10 Judy King ..... CPRB                 | 27 Eric Dye ..... IS&C                 |
| Marie Thomasson .... Personnel          | Richard Harris .. Gen. Services        |
| 11 Ralph Nottingham. Gen. Services      | 29 Roger Haynes ... Gen. Services      |
| 12 Charles Britt ..... Gen. Services    | Ron Robinette ... Gen. Services        |
| Victoria Ross ..... CPRB                | 30 Samantha Chance ..... CPRB          |
| Dot Yeager ..... Sec. Office            | Twila Ruggieri ..... PEIA              |
| 13 Darla Blackmon .... Gen. Services    | Linda Snell ..... Gen. Services        |
| Betty Lanham ..... Sec. Office          |  |

